

UNITY IN DIVERSITY: AN INDONESIAN VISION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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14. ABSTRACT Indonesia is the fourth most populous nation in the world after China, India and the United States of America, at just about 240 million people. It is also the third largest democratic country and home to more practicing Muslims than any other nation. Its geostrategic location, abundant natural and human resources make her an engine for economic prosperity. Indonesia prides herself on her "Unity in diversity," which is her national motto that recognizes the identities and differences of all her people all living peacefully and with a common, national purpose. This same vision is suggested as a different view of international relations than is prevalent in the West with its emphasis on security and it has demonstrated this propensity through its leadership and participation in the international movement of the non-aligned nations for over 50 years. Instead, Indonesia views the world through the lens of peace, prosperity and friendship. It is a view not uncommon among nation-states that are not seen as global powers. This provides a view and offers an Eastern as Asia or Southeast Asia way for the world's powers to consider an alternative to the long-standing cycle of war and violence that has plagued mankind.				
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UNITY IN DIVERSITY: AN INDONESIAN VISION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

by

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ABSTRACT

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Indonesia is the fourth most populous nation in the world after China, India and the United States of America, at just about 240 million people. It is also the third largest democratic country and home to more practicing Muslims than any other nation. Its geostrategic location, abundant natural and human resources make her an engine for economic prosperity. Indonesia prides herself on her “Unity in diversity,” which is her national motto that recognizes the identities and differences of all her people all living peacefully and with a common, national purpose. This same vision is suggested as a different view of international relations than is prevalent in the West with its emphasis on security and it has demonstrated this propensity through its leadership and participation in the international movement of the non-aligned nations for over 50 years. Instead, Indonesia views the world through the lens of peace, prosperity and friendship. It is a view not uncommon among nation-states that are not seen as global powers. Indonesia practices, and offers to the world, a vision of peace, prosperity and friendship as an alternative to the pessimistic cycle of war and violence that has plagued mankind.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY: AN INDONESIAN VISION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Indonesia offers the world a paradigm for international relations that emphasizes peace, prosperity and friendship through “unity in diversity” and an emphasis on directing human energy and capital to building a strong society rather than simply investing all our resources in an endless cycle of militarism and violence.

Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country in the world and consists of 17,508 islands. The archipelago is at the crossroads of two oceans, the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean, and bridges two continents, Asia and Australia.¹ This strategic position has always influenced the political, economic, security, and socio-cultural life of the country.

The Indonesian people consist of hundreds of ethnic groups, with each group having a distinct culture, language, art, tradition and custom. Those ethnic groups politically and geographically unite into a nation, the Indonesian nation, under the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, with *Pancasila* (the Five Principles, consist of belief in one God, just and civilized humanity, Indonesian unity, democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultations, and social justice for all the peoples of Indonesia) as its state and political philosophy.² *Pancasila* is very important because it is the foundation of the Republic of Indonesia and reflects the ancient culture of the Indonesian people and their commitment to the idea of a unified Indonesia.

While Indonesia is home to the largest number of Muslims in the world, its constitution guarantees religious rights to all people. At least six world religions find their adherents in Indonesia: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. This great diversity is reflected in the country's national motto “*Bhinneka*

Tunggal Ika" which means "Unity in Diversity" that literally means "(Although) in pieces, yet One."

Indonesia has long encouraged the growth of many unique cultures. It is an example of a nation with "unity in diversity" where its people can live together in peace and harmony, and also an example of how democracy can go hand in hand with religiosity, especially Islam. Indonesia is a rising political and economic power and is keen to gain a leadership position in the region through constructive and cooperative gestures and balanced bargaining between major powers. The nation is strengthening through participative democratization by reforming various institutions and processes. Indonesia pledges "prosperity, democracy and justice" for all its people. This same worldview informs Indonesian foreign policy. As such, it provides an example for all the nations of the world to mold their own foreign policies to recognize and embrace and rejoice in diversity and to allow the peaceful coexistence of all peoples.

With its domestic vision of unity in diversity and foreign policy vision of "a million friends and zero enemies" in the world, it is an example of, and indeed a catalyst for, a vision of true international friendship and cooperation. Indonesia will continue with its free and active politics and will always struggle for justice and world peace by encouraging soft power and nonviolence. Unlike some of the major powers, Indonesia does not view the world as a series of threats from real or potential enemies. This point of view has a profound impact on Indonesia's actual relations with all the other members of the world community.

Understanding Indonesia

The territory of the Republic of Indonesia stretches from 6.08' North latitude to 11.15' South latitude and from 94.45' to 141.05' East longitude. The Indonesian sea

area is four times greater than its land area, which is about 2.0 million sq km (including an exclusive economic zone) and constitutes about 81% of the total area of the country. The land area is generally covered by thick tropical rain forests, where fertile soils are continuously replenished by volcanic eruptions.

The Indonesian People. The estimated population of Indonesia is around 240.3 million people (based on the latest census in 2009), which put Indonesia as the world's fourth most populous country after China, India and the United States, and also the largest Muslim population in the world.³ The work force (15-64 years of age) is 65.4 percent of the total population and consists of 76,743,613 males and 76,845,245 females.

There are about 500 ethnic groups in Indonesia spread from Sabang (the northern tip of Sumatera Island) to Merauke (the eastern tip in West Papua Island). The Javanese community is the largest number of Indonesia's total population, followed by Sundanese, Madurese, Minangkabau, Buginese, Batak and Balinese. Other ethnic groups include the Ambonese, Dayaks, Sasaks, the Acehnese and Papuans. Apart from the indigenous communities, other sub communities of foreign descent are the Chinese, Arabs and Indians.

Indonesian Culture. For centuries, Indonesia has encouraged the growth of many unique cultures. Today, this diversity is revered and celebrated by the Indonesian people and government alike. On Java, the Sundanese of West Java and Javanese of Central and East Java are known for having several layers of formality in their language. In Javanese, to speak to an elder and then to a child is like speaking two different languages. The Toraja of Sulawesi are famous for their elaborate funeral ceremonies

and the Minangkabau of Sumatra still maintain a matrilineal society, everything from houses to animals is inherited from mother to daughter.

Today, the country maintains this cultural richness, even as it embraces the introduction of new forms of expression. The traditional music such as *gamelan* (Javanese traditional orchestra)⁴ and *angklung* (Sundanese traditional music instruments made from bamboo) coexist with new *dangdut* (traditional popular music) and rock and roll. The ancient art of *wayang kulit* (Java traditional skin puppet or shadow puppetry), complements the modern Indonesian film industry. While the themes and stories from historic epics like the *Ramayana* persist, newer literature like that of the author Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Pramoedya Ananta Toer (6 February 1925 – 30 April 2006) was an Indonesian author of novels, short stories, essays, polemic and histories of his homeland and its people)⁵ has become an irrevocable part of Indonesian culture.⁶

Indonesia is home to the largest number of Muslims in the world. Its constitution guarantees religious rights to all people. At least six world religions find their adherents in Indonesia: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. Additionally, other faiths can be found, especially in isolated societies. These religions, called traditional faiths, are also accepted. According to recent counts, approximately 90 percent of the population are Muslim, seven percent are Christian (Protestants and Catholics), around three percent are Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, or traditional.

There are more than 700 languages and dialects spoken in the archipelago. They normally belong to the different ethnic groups of the population. Some of the distinctly different local languages are: Acehnese, Batak, Sundanese, Javanese, Sasak,

Tetum of Timor, Dayak, Minahasa, Toraja, Bugisnese, Halmahera, Ambonese, Ceramese, and several Irianese languages. To make the picture even more colorful, these languages are also spoken in different dialects. Bahasa Indonesia or Indonesian language is the national language. It is similar to Malay and written in Roman script based on European orthography. English is the most prevalent foreign language, while Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, German, and French are increasing in popularity.

Indonesian Thought. In the early twentieth-century, Indonesian thinkers conceptualised the state they wanted to develop, and particularly how to accommodate the rich variety of ethnic differences of her people.⁷ Notwithstanding the highly promising beginnings of Indonesian self-appreciation in the early twentieth century and an extraordinarily successful cooptation and, as necessary, subjugation of local and regional expressions of ethnicity to the notion of a united Indonesia, there developed at the same time the new and, to many, strange concept of an "Indonesian race." That concept challenged pre-modern notions of culture and belonging, and created a damaging feature of the understanding of Indonesian citizenship that endures to this day.

Unity in Diversity. *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* is the official national motto of Indonesia. The phrase is Old Javanese and is often loosely translated as "Unity in Diversity," but literally means "(Although) in pieces, yet One." It is inscribed in the Indonesian national symbol, *Garuda Pancasila* (written on the scroll gripped by the Garuda's claws), and is mentioned specifically in Article 36A of the Constitution of Indonesia.⁸

It was during the second Indonesian Youth Congress on October 28, 1928, that *Bahasa Indonesia*, the Indonesian Language, was for the first time declared as lingua franca for ethnic groups residing in the territory now called Indonesia. The event called the “Youth Pledge” was the starting point of all ethnic groups to work together to build one motherland, one nation, and one language, Indonesia. This was also one of the most important events before independence as it encouraged Indonesian people to struggle and to reach their independence as soon as possible from the colonialism (the Dutch and Japan).

The island of Sumatera is home to the ethnic groups of Acehnese, the Gayo, the Batak, Malays, Minangkabauan, Jambi, Palembang and others. The island of Java is home to the ethnic groups of Betawi, Javanese, Sundanese. The island of Bali is home to the Balinese, while the ethnic groups of Lombok, Sasak, Flores and Timorese live in East and West Nusa Tenggara. In Kalimantan live in the Dayak, Banjar and Malays; in Sulawesi the Minahasans, Torajans, Bugisnese, Makassar, Mandar and others. The Asmat, Marind-anim, Dani, Yali, Korowai, Biak, Serui, Artak are ethnic groups that live in Papua. Each of these ethnic groups has its own distinct dances popularly known among the public, such as Saman dance of Aceh, Tortor dance of the Batak, Piring dance of Minangkabau (West Sumatra), Ondel-ondele dance of Betawi, and Lenso dance of Ambon (Maluku).

Each ethnic group adopts a different kinship system as well. The Bataks, for instance, adopt a patriarchal system and bear clan names after their own surnames. The Bataks are known for their talented singers. The Minangkabauans, known as domestic tough migrants, stick to a matriarchal system. Sundanese and Javanese are

known for their industrious and tenacious workers, and their arts *batik* textiles are popular at home and abroad. So, too, are the Balinese with their particular dancing and carvings. The Bugisnese-Makassars have been known for their seafaring people with their wooden “*phinisi*” ships sailing high seas since hundreds years ago. Meanwhile, the people of Maluku have been known for their skillful singers and traditional musical instruments, and Papuans are the country’s promising athletes for the future.

Vision and Mission. The vision of Indonesia is to realize a secure, united, harmonious and peaceful livelihood of the people, the nation and the state, to bring about a law-abiding society, that upholds equality and human rights, and to create an economy that provides employment opportunities and a decent livelihood for all Indonesians. These ambitious goals, if realized, will build on as a strong foundation for sustainable development. Indonesia’s mission is to establish a secure and peaceful country, to realize a just and democratic country, and to realize a prosperous country. The key strategy to achieving the goal is maintenance of good governance based on the spirit, soul, values and consensus of the underlying foundation of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. This underlying foundation can be found in the *Pancasila* philosophy, the 1945 Constitution (particularly the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution), and maintaining the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia and sustaining pluralism and diversity under the *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* principles. This political dimension of Indonesian strategy is complemented by a necessary development strategy that is oriented towards developing Indonesia in all aspects of life. Indeed, this development principle is even enshrined in the preamble of the 1945 Constitution.

The Indonesian View of Domestic Political Life

There are varying views regarding the current domestic political life in Indonesia whether they come from inside or outside the country. Muslim scholar, Ahmad Syafii Maarif of Yogyakarta State University (located in the city of Yogyakarta), a former chairman of *Muhammadiyah* (*Muhammadiyah* is the second largest Islamic organization in Indonesia with approximately 29 million members)⁹ said that pluralism had been a fact of life in Indonesia for some time. Pluralism in Indonesia is something that is deep-rooted in history and will long endure.¹⁰ Although at certain periods of time there has been political-religious authoritarianism that attempts to uproot pluralism, such efforts have always ended in vain. From this perspective, Indonesia stands out as a conducive place for religious freedom, coexistence and even ecumenicalism. Mr. Syafii said the emergence of extreme Islamic radical and militant groups was only a temporary phenomenon with few adherents and would disappear once everyone was prosperous. Once Indonesia overcomes its acute, domestic, socio-economic problems, religious uncivilized radicalism will have no corner in this country to survive.

Alwi Shihab, the Indonesian foreign minister during former president Abdurrahman "Gus Dur" Wahid's administration, also spoke at the conference. Alwi said that the belief in the absolute truth of each religion by its believers would not harm religious pluralism. It is a prerequisite for a person to become religious. How can someone become a religious person if he does not believe that his religion is the truth? What is more important is that no one has the right to act as God by judging that she or he will go to heaven while others of different beliefs will go to hell. Alwi said that there were passages in the Koran that allowed for pluralism.

Mr. Gita Wiryawan, Indonesia's Investment Chief, highlighted three indicators that contribute to Indonesia's current sense of normalcy. First, is Indonesia's economic resilience, demonstrated by her ability to weather the storm of the international financial crisis that began in 2008. He attributed this resiliency of the Indonesian government in being able to accelerate spending and infuse liquidity into the financial system. Second, is the rising level of foreign investment in Indonesia over the past five years.¹¹ Third, is the current degree of political stability. He remarked that despite the chaos in the past, Indonesia's democracy is now blossoming and there is no evidence of the nation facing a crisis of disintegration. In his conclusion, he expressed his optimism that Indonesia still has a bright future and encourages those with an interest in Indonesia to take a long term perspective. A new generation of Indonesians could well propel the Indonesian dream.¹²

Mr. Budiman Sudjatmiko, a parliamentary member from the Indonesian Democratic Party, currently an opposition party, remarked that the development of Indonesia would be very promising because during more than the last ten years he has seen how the Indonesian political scene has fragmented instead of evolving into natural differentiated political streams. On the issue of coalition, he responded that the Indonesian political scene is too fluid, making it difficult to measure the stability or permanence of domestic political coalitions. Indeed, the Indonesian political scene will continue to see loose coalitions while maintaining an equilibrium of stability.

There is a concern that an optimistic view of the rise of younger leaders is actually challenged by the fact that Indonesia is aging, and consequently, key areas in business and politics will still be dominated by older players. In response, Dr. Anies

Baswedan, Rector of the Jakarta-based Paramadina University, maintained his optimistic view and argued that there is still hope for young political leaders despite the demographic trend. This was based on three reasons: first, the establishment of many new political parties in the past decade; second, the high participation rate of young activists assisting the running of political parties; and finally, the recruitment and training of young cadres across the archipelago by the large established political parties.

He also mentioned that Indonesia will remain a unitary state and not fragment regardless of the levels of decentralization the state is trying to achieve. Maintaining the unitary state model is what matters most although flexibility could be exercised regarding the delegation of the authority by taking into account the unique circumstances of each region. Concerning the relationship between state and religion, Dr. Baswedan mentioned that although the relationship between state and religion has always been and will always be dynamic, he was assured that Indonesia in the future will still follow a secular path. He also remarked that Indonesia is an example of how democracy can go hand in hand with religiosity.

The Indonesian Approach to International Affairs

As Indonesia celebrated its 65th independence day on August 17, 2010, it is also trying to reorient its foreign policy goals to emerge as a responsible power in the Southeast Asian region. The two continuous terms of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono have given a new direction to Indonesia's foreign policy. Soekarno and Soeharto, the iconic leaders of Indonesia's past, pursued contrasting approaches to domestic and foreign policies. Soekarno was keen on emerging as the undisputed leader of Non Aligned Movement (NAM). Soeharto formatted his foreign policy by toeing

the U.S. line to a large extent. Today, the clear trends are that Indonesia's foreign policy is a unique amalgamation of the two schools of thought and policy of adaptation to changing geopolitical and geostrategic compulsions.¹³

Indonesia is strengthening participative democracy by reforming various institution and processes. Indonesia is being observed by the global community as an example of a predominantly Islamic nation with secular political credentials that has also adopted a strong stance against terrorism. In the context of domestic and international challenges, Indonesia is a nation that is reawakening.

Indonesia's foreign policy slogan is "a million friends- zero enemies." This policy was announced by newly-elected President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in a statement at his inauguration in January 2010.¹⁴ It clearly articulated that it would improve relations with every nation through bilateral ties and multilateral institutions. This policy advocates justice and order in the international arena, better investment policy for economic development, democracy and consolidation in regional integration, protecting Indonesian nationals particularly migrant workers, maintaining national unity, and a more active and effective diplomacy.

The process to reach these goals is difficult. Any nation would face serious problems when emerging from centuries of colonial rule followed by decades of autocratic domestic politics. In spite of these challenges, Indonesia is achieving impressive economic results. She is one of the few countries in the world that booked positive growth last year and has grown by around 4 percent in each of the last two quarters. Its economy should continue to improve with more investment in human resources and technology.

In the future, Indonesia will build a more dignified democracy, ensuring people's political rights but without sacrificing stability. The government will continue to uphold human rights and eliminate any kind of discrimination. Indonesia will continue with its free and active politics and will always struggle for justice and world peace. It also remains committed to reforming the global economy through the G20 and to multilateral relations through the UN, particularly in addressing issues of climate change and the millennium development goals. Indonesia will remain in the forefront of efforts to create a better world order working to maintain world justice and peace.

Indonesia will remain in the forefront of efforts to bring about a better world order. It will also continue to actively promote environmental stewardship while calling for reform of the world economy, through regional organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) and global ones such as the G-20 economic forum. She will also endeavor to achieve the established Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and act in concert with her many international friends to promote multilateralism through the United Nations, for the sake of intercivilization harmony.

Taming the Beast of International Violence

Sun Tzu, actually did not define what war is, however he did provide his views on war. He said that generally in war the best policy is to take a state intact, to ruin it is inferior to this. This differs markedly from the theory of war espoused by Clausewitz who said the main object of war was to destroy the enemy's force. Sun Tzu's aphorisms that the acme of skill was to win without fighting and to attack the enemy's strategy point to a different, Eastern way of war.¹⁵ This paper offers an Eastern way for peace.

Indonesia would not only implement productive, moderate and friendly national principles but also exhibit energy in promoting dynamic internationalism. It is now facing a new environment where it has no enemy and no other country sees it as an enemy. Indonesia would cooperate with anybody who had the same objectives, namely a new world order which is peaceful, safe and just.

If you look at the nonviolent movements in Eastern Europe, such as the Solidarity movement in Poland, you'll find a religious component, but it wasn't a religious movement per se. For example, take Vaclav Havel and the supporters of the "Velvet Revolution" in the Czech Republic.¹⁶ They were emphatically secular people who developed their secular approaches to nonviolence. There has always been a strong moral component in nonviolence, and maybe a spiritual component, but not necessarily a religious component.

When we get into the details of the negotiations in international crises, like the Cuban missile crisis, we will find that strategic thinking goes out the window. Leaders on both sides, Kennedy and Khrushchev in the Cuban missile crisis found their nuclear weapons were simply useless. They were faced with the responsibility of world destruction.

These leaders who have stared Armageddon in the face, have a much greater appreciation for nonviolence as something at the heart of politics. The people of Indonesia were struck by their interest in nonviolence, by their historical perspective on the use of nonviolence. A speech given by President John F. Kennedy after the Cuban Missile Crisis demonstrates this vision:

What kind of peace do we seek? Not a Pax Americana enforced on the world by American weapons of war. Not the peace of the grave or the

security of the slave. I am talking about genuine peace, the kind of peace that makes life on earth worth living, the kind that enables men and nations to grow and to hope and to build a better life for their children — not merely peace for Americans but peace for all men and women — not merely peace in our time but peace for all time.¹⁷

For us, the lesson learned is that we tend to think of nonviolence as a very exotic and farfetched thing. Actually, nonviolence is at the heart of what democracy is. Every vote is an expression of nonviolence. Democracy is institutionalized nonviolence. This is a more practical, everyday subject than a lot of us think, and we have more allies in this view than we realize.

Indonesia's Contribution to a Better World

In the past year, Indonesia's foreign policy has been characterized primarily by the increasing use of economic diplomacy. The choice of economic diplomacy as a foreign policy instrument is timely and realistic because since 2008-2009 Indonesia has been working hard to insulate itself from the inevitable ups and downs generated by the inescapable phenomenon of globalism. Indonesia has used this economic diplomacy not only to keep the country economically resilient, but also to create a new architecture of global financial systems through a joint effort of the G20 forum. Being an active member of the forum, Indonesia consistently pronounces the urgency of a balanced, fair, transparent and credible global financial system.

Indonesian participation in peacekeeping operations, as mandated in the preamble of the 1945 Constitution, is a reflection of its active contribution for the creation of a world order bases upon independence, eternal peace, and social justice. Indonesia's first involvement with the United Nations' sanctioned Peacekeeping Mission was in 1957, by participating in UNEF (UN Emergency Forces), in Sinai. To this date, Indonesia has been involved in 24 Peacekeeping Missions under the banner of the

United Nations. Indonesia's total number of 1.618 personnel, currently ranks number 17 among Troops/Police Contributing Countries to United Nations Peacekeeping Missions.

Currently, Indonesia is actively involved in 6 United Nations Missions in 5 countries, as follows:

1. Congo (MONUC) – 189 (174 troops and 15 Military Observers);
2. Liberia (UNMIL) – 2 Military Observers;
3. Sudan (UNMIS – 18 Police and 12 Military Observers; UNAMID – 4 Troops, 2 Military Observers and 138 Police);
4. Lebanon (UNIFIL) – 1.248 Troops; and,
5. Nepal (UNMIN) – 5 Military Observers.

In April 2010, Indonesia also deployed a sigma class corvette "KRI (Indonesian Republic's Ship) Frans Kasiepo – 368" as part of UNIFIL Maritime Task Force. The presence of an Indonesian Navy vessel in Lebanese waters has been very much appreciated by the international community, and marked a new chapter in the history of Indonesia's participation in UN peacekeeping operations.

The term "peacekeeping" is not actually stated clearly in the United Nations (UN) Charter because none of the chapter in the UN charter specifically mentioned it. The 2nd Secretary General of the UN, Dag Hammarskjöld, referred to it as "chapter six and a half," placing peacekeeping between Chapter VI, which is the traditional approach to resolve conflict peacefully, and Chapter VII, which uses a more forceful action to resolve disputes.¹⁸

The deployment of Indonesian troops as part of the United Nations peacekeeping mission reiterates its stance and commitment toward the maintenance of world peace

and security. Indonesian participation also gives weight to the conduct of its international relations and at the same time contributes to the implementation of its independent and active foreign policy.

The presence of the UN mission should be able to prevent the recurrence of conflict. This is exactly the reason why we must consider post conflict peace building from the beginning of any peacekeeping mission. In this regard, the involvement of the Peace Building Commission (PBC) in drafting the mandate of a UN Peacekeeping Mission is essential. Indonesia has taken on an increasing role in UN missions, most recently sending troops to Lebanon. As mentioned by the American Major General Vernon Miyagi, co-director the Garuda Shield 09 multi-national exercises in Indonesia, "Indonesia has taken a lead role in supporting peacekeeping worldwide" and "They have made remarkable progress over the last decade."¹⁹

A Vision of Peace, Prosperity and Friendship. During the G20 Summit in Seoul in 2010, Indonesia announced that they will emphasize the issue of development, including financial inclusion, which is of paramount importance to developing countries. Indonesia's strong commitment to environmental diplomacy continued in the past year. As an ardent advocate for the efforts to address climate change, Indonesia spares no effort to ensure that the implementation of the 2007 Bali Plan of Action on climate change stays the course. Indonesia's continued environmental diplomacy will remain needed to assure, in collaboration with other countries, the successful outcome of the forthcoming Cancun Conference.²⁰

In the political and security realm, Indonesia's diplomacy has been dedicated to the development of a regional security architecture marked by a dynamic equilibrium

among its parties. Indonesia has done its utmost to ensure the role of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)²¹ as the driving force in the regional architecture building process; to ensure the centrality of ASEAN in the “plus one” and “plus three” processes as well as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), East Asia Security (EAS), Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).²² The Indonesian government has also continued to use peacekeeping operations as a foreign policy instrument, especially in fulfilling the constitutional mandate to keep international peace and order.

On the Middle East issue, Indonesia has been firm and steadfast in its support for a comprehensive just, and lasting peace in the region. On the Israeli-Palestinian track, in 2010, on the sidelines of the 65th session of the UN General Assembly, Indonesia hosted the Four Country Initiative on Palestine. This is an important step in Indonesia’s contribution to the efforts in resolving the Israeli-Palestine conflict.

On the bilateral level, despite specific challenges that emerged to confront relations between Indonesia and Malaysia (ongoing border disputes) as well as between Indonesia and The Netherlands (lingering resentment from the scars of colonialism), Indonesia has generally gained a lot for its national development from various bilateral initiatives. The Indonesian President’s visit to many countries in Asia, America, Africa, Australia and Europe during his presidential period has resulted not only strengthened bilateral relations but also produced pledges of increased investment from the governments and private sectors of those partner countries.

The foreign policy establishment in Indonesia has moved in a positive direction in the past year. On foreign relations issues, the government has always listened to the

people's voices attentively while exerting firm and reasonable positions. The role of parliament in foreign policy has been respected, and the traditionally limited role of the vice president in foreign relations has been expanded by his participation in the US-initiated Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in April 2010, and in the recent US-ASEAN Summit in New York in 2010.

In the years ahead, there will be more room for Indonesian foreign policy activism. The chairmanship of Indonesia in ASEAN in 2011 will provide Indonesia with the opportunity to lead and to strive for the realization of the ASEAN Community. Indonesia will now have a chance to exercise leadership on behalf of the common good of ASEAN as well as the global family of nations.

Some problems have been experienced over the year in Indonesian-Malaysian and Indonesian-Dutch relations and have taught us one very important lesson: there is no fit-for-all strategy in bilateral diplomacy. Bilateral relations must be tailored to each individual relationship and not generalized within a regional or global framework. For example, the Indonesian relationship with the Netherlands is still tainted by the pain and humiliation inflicted upon the Indonesian people during the colonial period and strong resentments persist. Unless resolved once and for all, this "history" will continue to affect Indonesia's bilateral relations. Thus, in strategizing, bilateral diplomacy must be recalibrated. In its implementation, it will require consideration for the particularities of each partner country while maintaining long-standing conventional practices.

Another important lesson is the need for greater foreign relations literacy among the Indonesian populace. There is a need for education of the Indonesian people on the

nation's foreign policy. This is a fundamental responsibility in a vibrant representative democracy. It is also necessary to bridge the gap between the public's expectations.

A greater consideration should also be given to the dynamism in the Indian Ocean Rim and the revitalization of the Non-Aligned Movement. The Indian Ocean's strategic and historical value warrants serious thought on what role Indonesia can play in the sub-region. On the Non-Aligned Movement, the need for its revitalization remains strong. As one of the founding states, it is natural that Indonesia would be expected to play a leading role in rejuvenating the movement. In the future, with 118 member states, the movement will need a diverse leadership. Indonesian foreign policy has emphasized for decades the principle of *bebas aktif* (active but not aligned) has been consistently adhered to this policy, and is highly likely to continue so for the foreseeable future.

A Vital Partner in Establishing a Better World.

Experience tells us that the attainment of worldwide calls to decolonize the world, and to contribute the establishment of a world order based on freedom, abiding peace and social justice, can be done without resorting to violence or hostility, let alone war. As the Indonesian constitution grants power to the President of the Republic of Indonesia to declare war (upon the approval of Parliament), the "million friends, zero enemies" principle would curtail the exercise of such power, except in the extreme case of self-defense. This curtailment is consciously self-imposed for good reason.²³

Indonesia has committed itself to becoming a democracy. Under democracy, political engagement (diplomacy) should override political violence (war). Our diplomacy might be critical toward other country's policy; but it should not build-up a hostile political

posture. Those who are not our friends (those who are not in-line with our national interests) are not necessarily our foe (in terms of acting in belligerence).

It is widely believed that democracies will not go to war with other democracies, the so-called Democratic Peace Theory, because their people (or Parliaments for that matter) are systemically engaged in the formulation of foreign policy and the conduct of foreign relations. This assertion entails two important consequences. First, it calls for bringing foreign policy closer to the people and, by implication, calls for reducing its historically elitist nature. This step should have been made possible since the Indonesia's 1999 Foreign Relations Law is endowed with such spirit. Second, Indonesia needs to do more to promote, and not patronize, the democratic process in ASEAN. The Bali Democracy Forum is a good modality for such an end, since it promotes inclusive, not exclusive diplomatic engagement. Beyond rhetoric, it is timely and important for Indonesia to empower people-centered diplomacy as the implementation of "a million friends, zero enemies" principle.

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said that Indonesia could now focus on all directions of foreign policy where it had "a million friends and zero enemies." Our movement at the international level is getting bigger and bigger and enables us to better address regional and global problems.²⁴

As a member of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations, Indonesia could now strengthen the stability, peace, and prosperity of Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific region. In the G-20, Indonesia can help reform the architecture of the world economy, and support the creation of a balanced, strong, and sustainable global economic growth. In the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), Indonesia could voice a

moderate, open, tolerant, and modern Muslim society that could bridge Islam and the West. In the United Nations, Indonesia is active in the international environmental movement and anticipating climate change and has sent peace troops in conflict areas such as Lebanon and Congo.

Indonesia is facing a strategic environment where no country perceives Indonesia as an enemy and there is no country which Indonesia considers an enemy. Indonesia will keep "on the front line in the efforts to save the earth from climate change," and to fight to reach the UN's Millennium Development Goals. Regionally, Indonesia with other ASEAN countries is working to make Southeast Asia a peaceful, prosperous and dynamic region.

Conclusion

Indonesia is the biggest archipelagic country and the fourth most populous nation in the world after China, India and the United States of America. It is also the third largest democracy country and home to more practicing Muslims than any other nation. Indonesia has also shown herself to be a fully participating and valued member of the international community. Indonesia prides itself on its "unity in diversity" and offers a quite different view of international relations than is prevalent in the West with its emphasis on security and she has demonstrated this propensity through her leadership and participation in the international movement of the non-aligned nations for over 50 years. Instead, Indonesia views the world through the lens of peace, prosperity and friendship. It is a view not uncommon among nation-states that are not seen as global powers.

Indonesia has historically encouraged the growth of many unique cultures and continues to do so today. Indonesia promotes “unity in diversity” where its people can live together in peace and harmony, and also an example of how democracy can go hand in hand with religiosity especially Islam. This nation, home to the largest Muslim population in the world, is again trying to gain the leadership position in the region through constructive and cooperative gestures and balanced bargaining between major powers.

Indonesia provides a peaceful vision for the vast majority of the world’s 200-plus nations and offers an Eastern way for the world’s powers to consider as an alternative to the long-standing cycle of war and violence that has plagued mankind.

With its unity in diversity and "million friends and zero enemies" in the world, Indonesia will play an important role in regional and world affairs. It will also continue with its free and active politics and will always struggle for justice and world peace by encouraging soft power and nonviolence.

Endnotes

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